

A DISCOURSE
AGAINST
MODERN OXFORD THEOLOGY.

DELIVERED

**AT THE OPENING MEETING OF THE THEOLOGICAL
SCHOOL OF GENEVA, OCT. 3, 1842,**

BY THE

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION
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BALTIMORE:
N. HICKMAN.

Wm. Wooddy, printer.
1843.

new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and on the Israel of God.

It is peculiarly delightful to those who love the Saviour, to see a revival of reformation truth at Geneva. Amidst the awful prevalence of Neologian and other heretical errors in that city, God has graciously refreshed the hearts of his people by raising up faithful men to bear witness to pure Evangelical doctrine, and institutions have been formed there for diffusing that doctrine among those reformed churches which had so grievously fallen from the heavenly truths maintained by their Protestant forefathers. The Geneva Evangelical Society, with its able instructors Gaussen, d'Aubigné, [and others, has led the way in this blessed work, and deserves the warm sympathy and support of all who truly love our Lord. The Foreign Aid Society (whose office is No. 10, Exeter Hall) was formed for the purpose of affording Christians in this country the opportunity of showing this sympathy. It is a society that in these days claims from all British Christians a far more efficient support than it has yet received. But moving wholly against the present stream of Tractarianism, and not having yet been fully brought before true Christians, it has

had little comparative support. I shall be glad if this notice of it bring it before the minds of Christians, and they become interested in the good doing among our brethren on the continent. This would be one means of remedying that spirit of division and separation which Tractarianism has tendered so greatly to increase.

The intolerable yoke of bondage which some would bind on our neck in the use of forms, is neither required by anything in the Word of God, nor by any consent which ministers have given to use the services of the Church. Even where Israel had promised obedience to the ceremonial law appointed by God himself, there were departures from the letter which were justified and allowed by Moses, by David, and by our Lord himself. The general principle is clear, *I will have mercy and not sacrifice*. No promise, as far as regards mere ceremonies, must be allowed to frustrate the end for which those ceremonies were appointed. The Prayer-Book itself explicitly states, that ceremonies may, upon just causes, be altered and changed, and are not to be esteemed equal to God's law. The present actual custom of the Church is a measure which the Word of God teaches us to regard in doubtful cases. (1 Cor. xi. 16.) I mention this, seeing the fear-

ful tendency of the present movement to a rigid formalism, that will, under the plausible cover of a strict obedience to the letter of rubrics and canons, harass scrupulous minds, divide the Church, impede real union and love, furnish innumerable snares to the conscience, and, if unchecked, will go on and bury all spiritual religion in a newly white-washed tomb of Popery.

But how blessed is the assurance that the real unity of that which is truly **THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH**, being united in spirit with the whole heavenly company, and all the just men made perfect, who, from the beginning of the world, have gone before us, (Heb. xii. 22—24,) and having communion with all the saints in every land, now living on the earth, is more and more manifesting itself even on the occasion of these serious errors. True Christians of all churches and denominations, holding the Head, are more and more finding out **THEIR ONENESS**, however separated by outward forms of churches, or languages, or countries. They see in each other the same faith, the same hope, the same charity: they have one Father, one Saviour, and Sanctifier: they have passed from death to life, they are made new creatures in Christ Jesus; they love their Saviour in sincerity, they are fighting the same battles with the

world, the flesh, and the devil ; they are journeying in the same narrow way ; they are eating the same bread of life, and drinking of the same living waters, waiting for the appearing of the same Redeemer, and will soon be together with each other and with him in the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. May each reader seek to belong to this blessed company.

EDWARD BICKERSTETH.

Watton Rectory, Herts,
Dec. 26th, 1842.

A DISCOURSE, &c.

DR. MERLE D'AUBIGNE commenced his discourse by some brief and general remarks upon the character and present condition of the college he was addressing. We will only give one paragraph, which, for its beauty and its graphic picture of that interesting institution, is peculiarly deserving our notice; he says of it, "She has none of those temporal sources of prosperity, of riches and power, which sustain other institutions, she can only exist as a plant of God, she cannot be anything, but in proportion as the Spirit of God, the power of God, circulate unceasingly in her trunk, her main branches, and even to her smallest twigs, covering the entire tree with leaves and flowers, and fruit. Gentlemen, Professors, and Students,

we are these boughs and branches. Oh! that we may not be found sterile and withered!"

The Professor then proceeded, after deploring the errors which at present are afflicting Switzerland and the continental churches, to the immediate subject of his address, which is the semi-popery now lifting its head in England.

In the bosom of the English University of Oxford, an ecclesiastical system has spread itself, which justly draws the sorrowful attention of Christendom. It is now some time since some of my lay friends, whom I love and respect, desired me to write against this dangerous error. I replied that I had neither the time nor capacity, nor the necessary documents. But, if I am unable to compose a work, I can at least express my opinion in a few words; it has even become my conscientious duty, since some respectable Christians have desired it, and it is this which has determined me to choose this subject for the solemnity of this day.

Let us well understand, gentlemen, the position which Evangelical Christian Theology occupies.

At the period of the Reformation there had already passed, so to speak, three distinct epochs in the Church.

I. *Evangelical Christianity*, which having its focus in the times of the apostles, shed its rays throughout the first and second centuries of the Church.

II. *Ecclesiastical Catholicism*, which, commencing in the third century, reigned to the seventh.

III. *The Roman Papacy*, which reigned from the seventh to the fifteenth century.

Such were the three grand epochs of the past history of the Church; remark now what essentially characterized each of them.

In the first period, authority was attributed to the revealed word of God.

In the second, it existed, according to some, in the Church, as represented by its bishops.

In the third, it rested in the Pope.

We willingly acknowledge that the second of these systems is very superior to the third; nevertheless it is inferior to the first!

In effect, in the first of these systems, it is God who reigns.

In the second, it is MAN.

In the third, it is, to borrow the apostle's words, "*Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders.*" (2 Thess. ii. 9.)

The Reformation, in quitting popery, might have returned to the second of these systems, that is to say, to ecclesiastical catholicity, or she might have returned to the first, that is, to evangelical Christianity.

In returning to the second, she would have made but half her journey. Ecclesiastical catholicity, in reality, is a middle system, a *via media*, as one of these Oxford teachers justly calls it in a published sermon. On one side it nearly approaches popery, for it already contains the germ of all the principles found there. On the other, it nevertheless retreats, for it even rejects popery.

The Reformation was no middle system, it went all the length, and with that resistless power which God alone gives, regained at one bound the evangelical Christianity of the apostles.

Now there is at present, gentlemen, a numerous and powerful party in England, supported even by some bishops, whose charges have filled us with astonishment and with pain, who would (according to their opponents) quit the ground of evangelical Christianity, again to occupy that of ecclesiastical catholicity, with a marked tendency towards popery; or, who (according to their own pretensions) would faithfully maintain a

ground hierarchical, or semi-roman, which is, according to them, the true nature and legitimate ground of the English Church. This is the movement called, from one of its principal chiefs, Puseyism. The task of the true children of the Catholic Church, says the British Critic, (the journal which is the organ of the Oxford party,) is to "unprotestanize the national Church."—"It is necessary," says one of these teachers, (Mr. Palmer,) entirely to reject and anathematize the principle of Protestantism, as being that of a heresy, with all its forms, its sects, and its denominations."—"I hate," said another, in some writings published after his death, "the Reformation and the Reformers more and more." (Froude's Remains.) In detaching the Church from the Reformation, this party pretend to wish, not to bring back popery, but to maintain the *via media* of ecclesiastical catholicity. Nevertheless, they do not hide, that if obliged to choose between what they consider as two evils, they would much prefer Rome to the Reformation. We find among these theologians, men who are highly respectable for their intelligence, their talents, and their moral character. And, let us acknowledge, the fundamental want which seems to have decided this movement, is a legitimate

want. They have felt in England, in the midst of all the stormy agitations of the present time, which rise against and shake the Church, a need of *antiquity*; they have sought a firm and immoveable rock upon which to stand.

This want is founded in human nature, and it is justified by the social and religious state of the present times. I also thirst for antiquity. But these Oxford teachers, do they well satisfy, in themselves and others, this want of our age?

I am convinced of the contrary. What a juvenile antiquity is that before which these eminent men prostrate themselves! It is the young and inexperienced Christianity of the first centuries which they call ancient; it is to the young man that they give the authority of old age. If it is for human antiquity that they agitate, certainly we are more ancient than the Fathers, for we have fifteen or eighteen centuries more than they; it is we who have the light of experience and the maturity of grey hairs.

But, no; it is not for such antiquity that a question can arise in the things belonging to God. The only antiquity which we would restore, is that of the *Ancient of days*, (Dan. vii. 13,)—of *Him who has been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth,*

or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. (Ps. xc. 1, 2.) The truly ancient document to which we appeal, is that of which it is said, *For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven*, (Ps. cxix. 89,) and which *shall stand for ever*. Behold, sirs, our antiquity!

Alas! that which afflicts us the most in these learned teachers of Oxford is, that whilst the people around them hunger and thirst for antiquity, they, instead of leading them to the ancient testimony of the Ancient of days, only give them puerile novelties. What novelties, in fact, and what insipid novelties! *this purgatory*, these *human pardons*, these *images*, these *relics*, this *invocation of saints*, which these teachers would give to the Church.* What an immense and monstrous innovation, that Rome, to which they would make us return!

Who are the broachers of new opinions, I would ask;—those who, like us, say with the Eternal Word, “*Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth*,” (Jas. i. 18.) or those who say, like the Tracts of the Times, “Rome is our mother; it is by her that we are born to Christ?” Those who, like us, say with the Eternal Word, “Take

* Tracts for the Times, No. xc. art. 6.

heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God;" (Heb. iii. 12,) or those who say, like these teachers, "In lacking visible union *with the see of Rome*, we forego a great privilege." *

Certainly, the Oxford teachers are the broachers of new opinions. This great innovation in Christianity does not deceive the partizans of Rome. In these new teachers they salute the partizans of Romish novelties. The famous Roman Catholic teacher Wiseman, wrote to Lord Shrewsbury: "We may depend upon a willing, an able, and a most zealous co-operation with any effort which we may make towards bringing her [the Anglican Church] into her rightful position in Catholic unity with the Holy See, and the churches of its obedience." . . . "It seems to me impossible to read the works of the Oxford divines, and especially to follow them chronologically, without discovering a daily approach towards our holy church, both in doctrine and in affectionate feeling. Our saints, our popes, have become dear to them by little and little; our rites and ceremonies, our offices, nay, our very rubrics are precious in their eyes, far, alas! beyond what many of us consider them."

* British Critic.

And these Oxford teachers, notwithstanding their protestations, do not they agree with this view of the case, when they say, "The tendency to Romanism is, as a whole, but a fruit of the deep yearning of the stirred Church to be again what her Saviour left her—ONE?"*

Such, sirs, is the movement operating in the English Church, which so many pious men, so many Christian works have rendered famous. Dr. Pusey had reason to say, in his letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, "On the issue of the present struggle hangs the destiny of our Church." And it is worth our while to stop here some moments to examine which party we ought to adhere to, as members of the ancient continental Church, and what we have to do in this grave and solemn occurrence.

Gentlemen, we must frankly confess that we would not have either popery, or the *via media* of ecclesiastical catholicism, but stand firm upon the ground of evangelical Christianity.

In what does Christianity consist when we oppose it to the two other systems which we reject?

There belong to it things essential and things

* Dr. Pusey's letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

accessory; it is only of that which forms its essence, of that which is even its vital principle, that I would now speak.

Now, there are three principles which form its essence; the first we may call the *formal* principle, because it is the means by which the system forms and constructs itself; the second we may call the *material* principle, because it is the very doctrine which constitutes this religious system; the third I would call the *personal* or *moral* principle, because it concerns the application of Christianity to the soul of each individual.

I will explain the *formal* principle of Christianity in three words:

The word of God, ONLY.

That is to say, that the Christian receives the knowledge of the truth, only from the word of God, and admits no other source of religious knowledge.

The *material* principle of Christianity, I will also as briefly explain:

The grace of Christ, ONLY.

That is to say, that the Christian receives the possession of salvation, only by the grace of

Christ, and recognizes no other meritorious cause for life eternal.

The personal principle of Christianity is explained in the simplest terms :

The work of the Spirit, ONLY.

That is to say, that there must be in every sacred soul a moral and individual work of regeneration, wrought by the Spirit of God, and not by a simple adjunction to the Church, and the magical influence of certain ceremonies.

Gentlemen, recall constantly to your minds these three simple truths :

The word of God, ONLY ;

The grace of Christ, ONLY ;

The work of the Spirit, ONLY ;

and they will be truly *a lamp to your feet, and a light to all your paths.*

These are the three great watch-lights which the Holy Spirit has raised in the Church ; their light ought to spread from one end of the world to the other. While they shine, the Church walks in the light ; as soon as these three lights are extinguished, or only obscured, darkness, like that of Egypt, is spread upon Christianity.

Now, Sirs, it is precisely these three fundamental principles of evangelical Christianity,

which are attacked and overthrown by the new system of ecclesiastical catholicism. It is not some point of detail, or some secondary doctrine to attack which they lend themselves at Oxford; it is that which forms the very essence of Christianity and of the Reformation, and these truths are so important, that as Luther said, "With them the Church stands, without them the Church falls."

I.

The formal principle of evangelical Christianity is this:

The word of God, ONLY.

Whoever would know and possess the truth in order to be saved, must address himself to that revelation of God, which is contained in the Holy Scriptures, and reject all human addition; all that is the work of man is to be justly suspected, and is certainly marked with a deplorable mixture of error. There is one only source at which the Christian drinks; it is that clear, limpid, and perfectly pure stream which flows from the throne of God. He turns away his lips from every other fountain which flows on a parallel, or which pretends

to mingle with the first; because he knows that looking at the place where these secondary sources spring, they all contain troubled, unhealthy, and perhaps deadly waters.

The sole, ancient, and eternal source, is *God*; the new, ephemeral, and easily exhausted sources, are *men*; and we would quench our thirst in God alone. In our sight, God is so full of sovereign majesty, that we regard it as an outrage, and even as impiety, to place anything, be it what it may, by the side of his Word.

Now this is what the chief of these Oxford innovators are doing. They say in "Tracts for the Times," "Scripture, it is plain, is not, on Anglican principles, the rule of faith." * "The Gospel doctrine or message" "is but indirectly and covertly recorded in Scripture, under the surface."† "Catholic tradition," says one of the principal chiefs of this school,‡ "is a divine informant in religious matters;" it is "the unwritten word." "These two things (the Bible and Catholic tradition) together make up a joint rule" of faith. "Scripture is but the document of appeal, and Catholic tradition the authoritative teacher." "Tradition is infallible,"

* Tract 90.

† Tract 85.

‡ Newman, Lectures on Romanism.

says another doctor,* “God’s unwritten Word must necessarily demand the same reverence from us [i. e. as his written word,] and for exactly the same reason, because it is his word.” “We must demand the teaching of the whole body of Catholic tradition,” says a third.†

Behold, gentlemen, one of the most fatal errors that can be spread in the Church.

From whence came it to Rome and to Oxford? Assuredly the respect which we have for the undoubted learning of these teachers will not prevent our saying: This error can arise from no other source than the natural aversion of man’s corrupt heart for all that Scripture teaches.

It can only be a depraved will which leads man to put aside Holy Scripture. They first abandon the source of living water, and then they dig here and there broken cisterns. It is a truth which the history of the whole Church shows us in her falls and successive declensions, as well as the history of each individual soul. The Oxford theologians have only followed the way of all flesh. Behold then, Sirs, two authorities established one by the side of the other; the *Bible* and *Tradition*. We need not hesitate what we must do. TO THE LAW AND TO THE TESTIMONY! we cry with the prophet, *if they speak not according*

* Keble’s Sermon. † Palmer’s Aids to Reflection.

to this word, it is because there is no light in them; behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish, and they shall be driven to darkness. (Is. viii. 20 and 22.

We reject this tradition as being a species of rationalism which introduces into Christian doctrine, as a rule, not the human reason of the present time, but the human reason of times past. We declare, with the churches of the Reformation in their symbolical writings, that Holy Scripture is the sole judge, the sole rule of faith, that it is to the Bible, as to a touchstone, that all dogmas must be brought, that it is by that Word that it must be judged whether they are pious or impious, whether they are false or true.* Undoubtedly there was originally a pure oral tradition; this was the instruction given by the apostles themselves, before the sacred writings of the New Testament existed. Nevertheless, even then, the apostles and evangelists, Peter and Barnabas, (Gal. ii. 14,) could not always *walk uprightly*, and consequently stumbled in their words. The Divinely inspired Scripture *only* is infallible, the word of the Lord *only* abideth for ever.

* Sola sacra scriptura judex, norma, et regula cognoscitur, ad quam ceu lydium lapidem, omnia dogmata exigenda sunt et judicanda, an pia, an impia; an vera, an vera falsa sint? (Formule de Concorde.)

But however pure was this oral teaching, after the apostles had left the earth, it was necessarily exposed in this sinful world, to be by degrees disfigured, soiled, and corrupted. This is why the Evangelical Church honours and adores with gratitude and humility, that gracious will of the Lord, in virtue of which this pure, primitive type, this first apostolical tradition, in all its purity, has been laid down in writing by the Spirit of God himself, in our sacred books, for all ages to come; and she finds in these writings, as we understand them, the divine touchstone, which she uses to test all human tradition.

She does not place co-ordinately, like the Oxford teachers and the Council of Trent, *written* and *oral* tradition, but she decidedly *subordinates* the last to the first, forasmuch as one cannot be sure that this oral tradition is only and truly the apostolic tradition such as it was in its first purity.

The knowledge of true Christianity, says the Protestant Church, flows only from one source, to wit, Holy Scripture, or, if you will, from *apostolical tradition*, such as we find it in the writings of the New Testament.

The apostles of Jesus Christ, Peter, Paul, John, Matthew, James, still minister in the Church;

no one has need, no one has the right to take their place. They minister at Jerusalem, at Geneva, at Corinth, at Berlin, at Paris; they render testimony in Oxford and in Rome. They preach to the ends of the world remission of sins and conversion to the name of the Lord; they announce the resurrection of the Crucified to every creature; they remit and they retain sins; they lay the foundations and raise the house of God; they teach missionaries and ministers; they regulate the order of the Church, and preside in the synods where Christians would be. They do all this by the *written Word* which they have left us. Or rather, Christ, Christ himself does it, since it is the Word of Christ, rather than the word of Paul, of Peter, or of James. "Go ye therefore and teach all nations; lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.)

Without doubt, as regarding the number of their words, the apostles have spoken more than they have written, but as regards the ground of the matter, they have said nothing otherwise, they have said nothing more than what they have left us in their sacred books. And if they have taught by mouth anything fundamental, otherwise or more explicitly than they have done by

writing, no one now can be in a condition to tell us, assuredly, one single syllable of these teachings.* If it has not been the will of God to preserve it in his Bible, no one can come to God's assistance, and do that which God has not done. If in the writings, more or less doubtful, of the companions of the apostles or the fathers called apostolic, we find some of the apostles' doctrine, it is first necessary to prove it, by comparing it with the certain teachings of the apostles,—that is to say, with the canon of Scripture.

Let us look what there is for the tradition of the apostles. Let us pass from the times in which they lived to those which succeeded; let us come to the tradition of the teachers of the first centuries. This tradition is doubtless inestimable to us; but in so far as it is presbyterian, episcopal, or synodical, it is no longer apostolical. And supposing (what is not really the case) that it does not contradict itself; suppose that one father does not destroy what another has established, (as happens, and as Abelard has already proved in his famous writing, the *Sic et Non*, the recent publication of which we owe to the pains of a French philosopher;)* supposing that, for a single point,

* *Ouvrages inédits d'Abelard*, published by M. Victor Cousin. Paris, 1836. The introduction, upon the history of scholastic philosophy in France, is a chef-d'œuvre.

one could reduce this tradition of the fathers of the Church to an union similar to that which apostolic tradition presents, the canon that would be thus obtained could in no wise be given as of equal authority with the canon of the apostles.*

We acknowledge, without doubt, that the *declarations of the Christian teachers* merit our attention, if the Holy Spirit speak in them, that Spirit always living and always acting in the Church. But we would not be absolutely bound by that which in this tradition and in these teachers, is only the work of man. And how shall we distinguish that which is of God and that which is of man, otherwise than by the Holy Scripture? "It remains," says St. Augustine, "that I judge myself after this only Master, to whose judgment I desire to escape."† The *declarations of the teachers of the Church* are only the testimonies of the faith which these eminent men have had in the doctrines of the Scripture. They show how these teachers have received these doctrines; they may, without doubt, be instructive and edifying to us, but there is in them no authority which binds us. All these teachers, Greeks, Latins, French, Swiss, Germans, English,

* Nitzsch, *Protestantische These*,

† *Retract in prol.*

Americans, put in the presence of the Word of God, all together, are only disciples who receive teaching. Men of the earliest and latest times, we are all equally upon the benches of this divine school, and in the pulpit of instruction, round which we find ourselves humbly gathered, nothing appears, nothing raises itself but the infallible Word of God. I discover in this vast auditory, Calvin, Luther, Cranmer, Augustine, Athanasius, Cyprian, by the side of our contemporaries. We are not "*disciples of Cyprian and of Ignatius*," as the Oxford teachers call themselves,* but of Jesus Christ. "We despise not the writings of the Fathers," let us say with Calvin, "but we use them, recollecting always *that all things are ours*, (1 Cor. iii. 22,) that they must serve us and not rule us, and that *we, we are Christ's*, (1 Cor. iii. 23,) whom in all things and without exception we must obey."†

The teachers of the first centuries are themselves the first to say it. They claim not for themselves any authority, and desire that the Word which instructed them should instruct us. "Now that I am not an old man," says Augustine, in his *Retractations*, "I do not expect not to stumble in

* Newman on Romanism.

† Calv. Inst. rel. chr.

words, or be perfect in words; how much less when, being young I begun to write!"* "Beware," says he again, "not to submit yourselves to my writings, as if they were the canonical scriptures."† "Esteem not like the canonical writings, the works of men, catholic, and justly honoured," says he elsewhere. "We are permitted, without staining the honour which is due to them, to reject those things which, in their writings (if perchance we find such) are contrary to the truth. I am, with respect to the writings of others, what I would wish that my readers should be with regard to mine."‡ "All that is said after the apostles, ought to be set aside," says Jerome, "and have no authority. However holy, however learned a man may be, who comes after the apostles, let him have no authority."§

"Neither antiquity, nor customs," says the Reformed Confession of France, "must be opposed

* *Ego mihi hanc perfectionem nec nunc arrogo, cum sim senex.* (Retractationes in prol.)

† *Noli meis litteris quasi scripturis canonicis inservire.* (In prolog. de trinitate.)

‡ *Talis ego sum in scriptis aliorum, quales volo esse lectores meos in meis.* (Ad Fortunatianum.)

§ *Quamvis ergo sanctus sit aliquis post apostolos, quamvis disertus sit, non habeat auctoritatem.* (In Psalm lxxxvi.)

to the testimony of Holy Scripture; but rather all things should be examined, ruled, and reformed according to it." And even the English Confession says, notwithstanding the Oxford Doctors, "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."* Also, the evangelical teachers of our day, giving their hand to the Reformers, the Reformers giving theirs to the Fathers, the Fathers theirs to the apostles; and, forming thus one golden chain, the whole church of all ages and of all nations, chaunt with one voice to the *God of truth* that hymn of one of our greatest poets†—

Parle seul a mon cœur, et qu'aucune prudence,
 Qu'aucun autre Docteur ne m'explique tes lois;
 Que toute creature en ta sainte presence,
 S'impose le silence,
 Et laisse agir ta voix !

* S. S. continet omnia quæ ad salutem sunt necessaria, ita ut quidquid in ea nec legitur, nec inde probari potest, non sit a quoquam exigendum, ut tanquam articulus fidei credatur, aut ad salutis necessitatem requiri putetur (Art. 6.)

† Corneille.

Finally, then, what is tradition? It is historical testimony.

There is an historical evidence for the facts of christian history as for those of all other history. We admit this evidence; only we sift and examine it as we do the other.

That which distinguishes the Romish and Oxford heresies from us, is, that they attribute infallibility to this witness as to Scripture itself.

Let us receive the testimony of tradition so far as it is true; for example, in what concerns the collection of the writings of the apostles, it does not follow that we need receive it when false as in the adoration of Mary and the celibacy of the priesthood.

The Bible is the holy, sober, and truly ancient faith of the child of God; human tradition springs from the love of novelties, and is the faith of ignorance, of superstition, and of puerile credulity.

How sad is it, but how instructive, to see the teachers of a church called to the glorious liberty of the children of God, and which depends only upon God and his word, put themselves again under the sorrowful bondage of human ordinances; and how does this example cry to us: *Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath*

made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. (Gal. v. 1.)

All the errors which we combat arise from truths ill understood. We also believe in the attributes of the Church of which they talk so much, but we believe in them according to the judgment of God, and our adversaries believe in them according to the judgment of men.

Yes, there is *one holy catholic church*, but it is, as says the apostle, *the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven.* (Heb. xii. 23.) *Unity* appertains to the invisible church as well as *holiness*. Doubtless it is required, that the visible church advance also, *each day*, in the possession of these celestial attributes; but neither rigorous unity nor universal holiness are, for her, essential perfections, and a *sine qua non*. To say that the visible church must be absolutely composed only of saints, is the error of the Donatists and fanatics of all ages; and, likewise, to say that the visible church must necessarily be externally one, is the correspondent error of Rome, of Oxford, and the formalists of all times. Let us beware of preferring the exterior hierarchy, which consists in certain human forms, to that internal hierarchy, which is the kingdom of God itself. Do not let us allow

the form, which is fleeting, to determine the essence of the Church; but, on the contrary, let us make the essence of the Church, to wit, the Christian life, which emanates from the Word and the Spirit, change and renew the form. *Form has destroyed the foundation (la forme a tue le fond,)* this is the history of popery and of false catholicism. *The foundation gives life to form, (le fond vivifie la forme,)* this is the whole history of evangelical Christianity, and of the true catholic church of Jesus Christ.

Yes, let it be so, the Church is judge in controversy, *judex controversiarum*. But, what is the Church? It is not the clergy, it is not the councils, still less is it the pope. It is christian people, the faithful. *Prove all things, hold fast that which is good, (1 Thess. v. 21,)* is said to the children of God, and not to some assembly, or to some bishop, and these are they who are thus constituted by God *judges of controversy*. If even an animal has the instinct not to eat that which may harm him, at least we may grant the Christian this instinct, or rather this intelligence, emanating from the power of the Holy Spirit. Each Christian (the Word declares it) is called upon to reject *every spirit that confesseth not that*

Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. (1 John iv. 1—5.) This is what we must essentially understand by the Church as *judge of controversies!*

Yes, I believe, and I confess it, there is not an authority in the Church, and without authority the Church cannot exist. But, where is it found? Is it in whoever has exterior consecration, whether or no he possesses theological gifts, whether he has or has not grace and justification? Rome herself does not yet pretend that orders save and sanctify; must, then, the children of God go in many cases for decision in the things of faith to the children of the world? What! a bishop, as soon as he gains his see, although perhaps he be without knowledge, without the Spirit of God, and although he have perhaps the world and hell in his heart, as had a Borgia and many other bishops, should he have authority in the assembly of the saints, and his lips always possess the wisdom and the truth necessary to the Church! No, Sirs, the idea of a knowledge of God, true, but at the same time destitute of holiness, is a gross supernaturalism. *Sanctify them through thy truth,* said Jesus. (John xvii. 17.) There is an authority in the Church, but that authority is entirely in the Word of God. There is not any

man, any minister, any bishop, whether he descend from Gregory, from Chrysostom, from Augustine, or from Irenæus, who has authority over souls. It is not with so mean a power, as that which proceeds from these men, that we, ministers of God, advance into the midst of the world; it is elsewhere than in this Episcopal succession that we seek that which gives authority to our ministry and validity to our sacraments.

Rejecting these sad innovations, we appeal to the ancient, sovereign, and divine authority of the Word of the Lord.

The question which we ask of those who are seeking after things eternal, is that which Jesus himself asks us: *What is written in the law? How readest thou?* (Luke x. 26.)

What we say to rebellious spirits, is what Abraham said to Lazarus in heaven: You have Moses and the prophets, hear them. (Luke xiv. 29.)

What we ask from all, is the conduct of the men of Berea, who *searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things be so.* (Acts xvii. 11.)

We ought to obey God rather than men; rather even than the most excellent among men. (Acts v. 29.)

This is true authority, true hierarchy, true

policy. The churches of men have man's authority,—it is natural. . But the church of God has the authority of God, and she allows no other.

II.

Such is the formal principle of Christianity; let us proceed to its material principle; that is to say, to that which is the body, the very matter of religion; we have given it in these forms:

The grace of Christ, ONLY.

By grace are ye saved, through faith, says Scripture, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. (Ephes. ii. 8, 9.) Evangelical Christianity not only seeks entire salvation in Christ, but also seeks it *in Christ only*, thereby excluding, as ground of salvation, every work of our own, every merit, all co-operation of man or of the Church. There is nothing, absolutely nothing, upon which we can build the hope of our salvation, except the *free grace and gift of God*, which is given us *in Christ*, and communicated *by faith*.

Now, this second grand foundation of evangelical Christianity is equally destroyed by the modern ecclesiastical catholicism.

The famous Tract No. 90, which I hold in my hand at this moment, endeavours to explain in a popish sense the Confession of Faith of the Church of England. The eleventh article of this Confession says, "That we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine."

Here is the commentary of the new Oxford school. "An assent to the doctrine that faith alone justifies, does not at all preclude the doctrine of works justifying also. If indeed it were said, that works justify in the same sense as faith only justifies, this would be a contradiction in terms; but faith only may justify in one sense—good works in another:—and this is all that is here maintained. After all, does not Christ only justify? How is it that the doctrine of faith justifying does not interfere with our Lord's being the sole justifier? It will of course be replied, that our Lord is the meritorious cause, and faith the means; that faith justifies in a different and subordinate sense. As then Christ justifies in the sense in which he justifies alone, yet faith also justifies in its own sense; so works, whether moral or ritual, may justify us in their own respective senses, though in the sense in which faith justifies, it only justifies."

"There are," says the *British Critic*, "catholic

truths which are printed on the surface of Scripture, as well as enveloped in its profound sense, such as the doctrine of justification by works." "The preaching of justification by faith," says another teacher of this school, "should be addressed by the *propagators* of christian knowledge to heathens; its *promoters* should preach to the baptized justification by works!"—Works, yes; but justification by them, never!

Justification is not, according to these teachers, that judicial act, by which God, because of the expiatory death of Christ, declares us to be held as just; it is confounded by them, as by Rome, with the work of the Holy Spirit. "Justification," says again the principal of these teachers, "is a continual work; it must be the Spirit's work, not Christ's." "The distinction between deliverance from guilt and deliverance from sin, is not scriptural."* "The *British Critic* calls the system of justification by grace, by faith, "radically and fundamentally monstrous, immoral, heretical and anti-Christian." "The prevailing notion," again say these teachers, "that it is necessary to bring forward the atonement explicitly and prominently on all occasions, is evidently quite opposed to what we consider the

* Newman, on Justification.

teaching of Scripture.”* And they condemn those who make “justification to consist in the act by which the soul trusts in the merits of Christ only.”†

I know that the Oxford teachers pretend to have found here a middle term between the evangelical and Romish doctrine. “It is not,” say they, “sanctification which justifies us, but the presence of God within us, from which this sanctification proceeds. Our justification is the possession of this presence.” But the Oxford doctrine has the same foundation as that of Rome. The Bible tells us of two grand works of Christ: CHRIST FOR US AND CHRIST IN US. Of these two works, which is it that justifies us? The Church of Christ replies, The first. Rome and Oxford reply, The second. In that all is expressed.

And these teachers do not hide it. They inform us that it is the system against which they set themselves. They declare that it is against the thought that, when the sinner “has by faith laid hold upon the saving merits of Christ, his sins are blotted out, covered, and can no more appear; *the hand writing which was against him is abolished*, so that he has now only to give thanks to Christ, who has delivered him from his sins.” “My lord,”

* Tract No. 80.

† Newman, on Justification.

says Dr. Pusey to the Bishop of Oxford, "it is against this system that I speak!" Stop! destroy not that good news, which alone has been, and will be in all ages, the only consolation of the sinner!

Gentlemen, if the first principle of the new school had for its effect to deprive the Church of all light, this second principle has for its end, to deprive it of all salvation. If righteousness came by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth? Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal. ii. 21; iii. 1, 2.) The most pious souls have felt that it was the source even of christian life, the foundation of the Church that was here attacked: "There is reason," says the excellent Bishop of Winchester, who, as well as many other bishops, and particularly those of Chester and Calcutta, has raised his voice against these errors - "there is reason," says he, in his Charge, "for fearing injury to the distinctive principles of our Church, if a cloud be raised again around that great doctrine which involves the mode in which we are 'accounted righteous before God;' if it be even called in question whether 'the Protestant doctrine of justification' be 'a funda-

mental of faith;’ if instead of the satisfaction of Christ, singly and alone, as the ground of acceptance, a certain inherent meetness of sanctification be so connected with the qualification *ab extra*, as to confound the operation within with the work of Christ without.”

The Oxford school pretend, with Rome and the Council of Trent, that justification is, the habitation within us, of God the Father and the incarnate Word, by the Holy Spirit, and that the two acts distinguished by the Bible and by our theologians form only one.* What then? 1st. God remits to the sinner the penalty of sin; he absolves, he pardons him. 2d. He even delivers him from sin; renews and sanctifies him.

Are not these two things?

The pardon of sins on the part of God, is this nothing in itself? Is it simply but an image of sanctification? Or can we say that the pardon which is granted to faith, and which produces in the heart the feeling of reconciliation, adoption, and peace, is something too exterior to be counted of importance?

“The Lutheran system,” says the *British Critic*, “is immoral, because it distinguishes between these two acts.” Doubtless it distinguishes,

* Newman, on Justification.

but it does not separate them. "This is the reason why we are justified," says Melancthon, in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession; it "is in order that as just, we may act well and begin to obey the law of God; this is why we are regenerated and receive the Holy Spirit, it is in order that the new life may have new works and new dispositions."

How many times has not the Reformation declared that justifying faith is not a knowledge "historical, dead, vain," but a "living act, a willing and a receiving, a work of the Holy Spirit, the true worshipping of God, obedience towards God upon the most important occasions." Yes, it is a living, efficacious faith which justifies. And this word *efficacious faith*, which we find in all our confessions of faith, is there to declare that faith *alone* is doubtless concerned in the work of justification, that doubtless it *alone* justifies, but that precisely because of that, it remains not *alone*, that is to say, without its operations and its fruits.

This is the grand difference between us and the Oxford school: we believe in sanctification by justification, and the Oxford school believes in justification by sanctification. With us justification is the cause, and sanctification the effect. With these teachers, on the contrary, sanctifica-

tion is the cause, and justification is the effect. And these are not indifferent things or vain distinctions,—it is the *sic* and the *non*, the yea and nay.

Whilst our belief establishes these two acts in their proper sense, the Oxford belief compromises and annihilates both. Justification no longer exists, if it is upon the sanctification of man, and not upon the grace of God, that it depends; for even *the heavens*, say Scripture, *are not clean in his sight*, (Job xv. 15,) and *he is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity*; (Habak. i. 13;) but, on the other hand, sanctification cannot be accomplished by itself; for how would you have the effects produced, when you begin by taking away the cause? *Herein is love*, says St. John, *not that we loved God, but that he loved us; we love him because he first loved us*. (1 John 10 and 19.) If I dare use a vulgar expression, I should say that Oxford puts the cart before the horse, (*met la charrue devant les bœufs*,) in putting sanctification before justification. In this manner neither the cart nor the horse will advance. For the work to advance, that which draws must be before that which is drawn. There is, then, no system more contrary to true sanctification than this, and to employ the terms of the *British Critic*, there

is consequently no system more monstrous and more immoral.

What! shall your justification not depend upon the work which Christ has accomplished upon the cross, but upon that which is accomplished in your heart! It is not, then, to Christ, to his grace that you must look in order to be justified, but it is to yourselves, to the righteousness that is in you—to your spiritual gifts!

From this result two great evils.

When you deceive yourselves in believing that there is in you a work sufficiently excellent to justify you before the throne of God; then you are inflated with pride, that *pride*, which says the Scripture, *goeth before a fall*.

When you can ill bear to be undeceived you will see, says the Saviour, that you are *poor, miserable, blind and naked*, and then you will fall into *despair*.

The heights of *pride* and the depth of *despair*, these are the only alternatives which the doctrine of Oxford and Rome leaves.

The christian doctrine, on the contrary, places man in a state of perfect humility; for it is another who justifies him; and yet it gives him a perfect peace, for his justification, the fruit of the *righteousness of God*, (2 Cor. v. 21,) is complete, sure, and eternal.

III.

Finally, let us mark the *personal* or *moral* principle of Christianity. We have expressed it in these words :

The work of the Spirit, ONLY.

Christianity is an individual work ; the grace of God converts soul after soul ; each soul is a world whereon an individual creation should be accomplished. The Church is only an assembly of all those souls in which this work has been accomplished, and who are now united, because they have *one sole Spirit, one sole Lord, one sole Father*.

And what is the nature of this work ? It is essentially moral ; Christianity acts upon the will of man, and changes it ; conversion comes from the action of *the Spirit of God*, and not from the magical action of certain ceremonies which, without man's faith being any thing, could change man by their own power. *In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.* (Gal. vi. 15.) "If ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Rom. viii. 13.)

Now the Oxford teachers, though there is among them here, as upon other points, a great diversity of opinion, some of them not going so far as

others, put immense obstacles in the way of this work of individual regeneration.

Nothing inspires them with more repugnance than christian individualism. They proceed by synthesis, and not by analysis. They do not set out from the principle laid down by our Lord: "*unless a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven;*" but they set out from this contrary principle, "all those who have partaken of the ordinances of the Church are born again." And whilst the Saviour, in all his discourses, provokes the efforts of each individual, saying, *Seek, ask, knock, strive to enter in at the strait gate; the violent take it by force.* The Oxford teachers, on the contrary, say;—"the idea of ourselves obtaining religious truth, and by our private inquiry, whether by reading or thought, whether by studying Scripture or other books,—is not contained in any of the commandments of Scripture. The grand question which ought to be put before our private judgment is this: What is the voice which should be considered as that of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church."*

And how shall this individual regeneration by the Holy Spirit be accomplished, since the first

* British Critic, (as *re-translated*.)

task of Puseyism is to say to all that it is already accomplished, that all the baptized are by that rendered partakers of the divine nature, and that to preach to them a new conversion is contrary to the truth? "It is baptism and not faith, which is the primary instrument of justification."* And we know that justification and conversion are with them the same work. To prevent the wretched from leaving the miserable state in which they are, would not the best means be, to persuade the poor that he has a great fortune, the ignorant that he has learning, or the sick that he has perfect health? Malice could not invent a stratagem more likely to impede conversion than this idea that all men baptized of water are regenerated.

Further yet, these teachers extend to the holy Sacrament itself this magic power. "We have almost embraced the doctrine," say they, in speaking of their church, "that God conveys grace, only through the instrumentality of the mental energies, that is, through faith, prayer, active spiritual contemplations, or (what is called) communion with God, in contradiction to the primitive view according to which the Church and her sacraments are the ordained and direct visible means of conveying to the soul, what is in itself

supernatural and unseen. For example, would not most men maintain, on the first view of the subject, that to administer the Lord's Supper to infants, or to the dying and insensible [apparently insensible—2d ed.] however consistently pious and believing in their past lives [under all circumstances and in every conceivable case—2d ed.] was a superstition? And yet both practices have the sanction of primitive usage. . . . Indeed, this may even be set down as the essence of the sectarian doctrine (however its mischief may be restrained or compensated in the case of individuals) to consider faith, and not the sacraments as the instrument [the proper instrument—2nd ed.] of justification and other Gospel gifts.”*

What, then, an infant, who has not reason and who knows not even how to speak, a sick man, whom the approach of death has deprived of feeling and intelligence, may receive grace by the mere exterior application of the sacraments. The will, the affections of the heart, need not be touched for man to be sanctified. What debasement of man, and of the religion of Jesus Christ! Is there much difference between such rites and the mummeries or the amulets of the corrupt Hindoos or the savage Africans?

* Tracts for the Times, Advert. Vol. ii.

If the first Oxford error deprives the Church of light; if the second deprive her of salvation; the third deprives her of all real sanctification. Doubtless we believe that the sacraments are means of grace; but they are only so where faith accompanies the use. To put faith and the sacraments in opposition, like the Oxford teachers, is to annihilate the virtue of the sacraments themselves. The Church protests against such fatal errors.

There is an entire work of renewal which must be accomplished in man; a personal, an individual work, and it is God who must perform it. *A new heart also, says the Lord, will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.* (Exod. xxxvi. 26.)

By what right is the Church here put in the place of God, and the clergy established as dispensers of divine life?

Little, then, does it matter if the life be dissipated or the heart attached to sin and to the world; for will not partaking of the sacraments of religion suffice for the possession of grace? They assure us that already sorrowful consequences manifest themselves in the lives of many of the Oxford sectarians.

The Puseyite system tends to lull consciences

by participating in exterior rites; the evangelical system tends continually to awaken them. The work of the Spirit, which is one of the grand principles of evangelical religion, consists not alone in regeneration, it consists also in a fundamental and universal sanctification. If instead of letting ourselves languish with human ordinances, we have really *the Spirit of Christ* within us, then we shall not suffer the least contradiction to continue between the divine laws on one hand, and our dispositions and our actions on the other. We shall not content ourselves with abstaining from the grosser manifestations of sin, we shall desire that even the germ of the evil be uprooted in our hearts. We shall love the truth, and we shall reject with horror that sad hypocrisy which sometimes defiles the sanctuary. We shall not have, in the communication of our religious convictions, that reserve which Puseyism prescribes: "*What ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house tops.*" (Matt. x. 27.) We do not belong to a communion where we trample under foot the holiest truths, eating the bread she gives us, and raising the arm to strike her. As soon as we perceive that a doctrine is opposed to the Word of God, neither dangers nor sacrifices will hinder us from throwing it far from us. The

work of the Spirit carries light into the most secret corners of our heart. *The king's daughter is all glorious within.* (Ps. xlv. 13.) The King whom we follow *has said to us, I am the light of the world, he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.* (John viii. 12.)

I again repeat in conclusion, Gentlemen, the three grand principles of Christianity are these:—

The word of God, ONLY.

The grace of Christ, ONLY.

The work of the Spirit, ONLY.

I ask you to-day to apply these principles continually, and to give them sovereign rule over your heart and life. And why, Gentlemen? Because all that brings our souls into immediate communion with God is salutary, and all that interposes between God and our souls is hurtful and ruins them. If a thick cloud pass between you and the sun, you no longer feel his kindly warmth, and perhaps you experience a chill. Place tradition and the authority of the Church between you and the Word of God, and you have no more to do with the Word of God, that is, with a divine and consequently powerful and perfect

instrument; but with the word of man, that is a human, and consequently feeble and defective instrument. 'There no longer exists that power which transforms the darkness into light.

Or else, put between you and the grace of Christ, the ordinances of the Church, the episcopal priesthood, the dispositions of the heart and works, and *grace shall be no more grace*, as says Saint Paul, the instrument of God shall have been broken, and one can no longer say, *that charity is out of faith unfeigned*, (1 Tim. i. 5,) that *faith worketh by love*. (Gal. v. 6.) That our souls are purified in obeying the truth. (1 Peter i. 22.) *That Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith*. (Eph. iii. 17.)

Man always seeks in some way to return to human salvation; such is the source of the Romish and Oxford innovations. What essentially characterizes these opinions, is the substitution of the Church for Jesus Christ. It is no longer Christ who enlightens, Christ who saves, Christ who pardons, Christ who commands, Christ who judges; it is the Church and always the Church, that is to say, an assembly of sinful men, feeble and subject like ourselves to error. *They have taken away our Lord, and we know not where they have laid him*. (John xx. 2.)

The errors, then, which we have pointed out are practical errors, destructive of true piety in the soul, casting out God and reinstating the flesh, although under a form which has "*a show of wisdom in will-worship and humility.* (Col. ii. 23.) If these doctrines prevail in the Church, Christianity will cease to be a new life, a holy life, a spiritual life, a heavenly life. It will become an affair of exterior ordinances, rites, and ceremonies. This is clearly seen by that servant of God whom we have already quoted. "Lastly," says Dr. Sumner, Bishop of Winchester, "I cannot but fear the consequences for the character, the efficiency, and the very truth of our Church, if a system of teaching should become extensively popular, which dwells upon the external and ritual parts of religious service, whilst it loses sight of their inner meaning and spiritual life; which defaces the brightest glory of the Church, by forgetting the continual presence of her Lord, seeming in effect to depose him from his rightful pre-eminence; . . . which tends to substitute, at least in unholy minds, for the worship in spirit and in truth, the observance of 'days and months, and times, and years;' for the cheerful obedience of filial love, an aspect of hesitation, and trouble, and doubt; for the freedom of the

Gospel, a spirit of bondage; . . . which works out salvation, indeed, with fear and trembling, but without any foretaste of the rest that remaineth for the people of God, and without joy in believing.”*

The universal Church of Christ hears such words with joy. Grateful to her divine Head, she sees the firmness with which the bishops, pastors and laity of England oppose the invading evil. But is this enough? Is this enough to retain on the edge of the abyss a Church and a people, dear, to this hour, to all the disciples of the Gospel?

Oxford conducts to Rome; Mr. Sibthorp and others have shown it. The march of Puseyism regularly converges, from tract to tract, towards the system of pure popery, plainly showing the end to which it tends. And even should it never bring about a total conversion to popery, what matters it? since Puseyism is nothing else than the Popish system in its essential features, transported into England? It is not necessary that the Thames should carry to the Romans the tribute of her waters; the Tiber flows in Oxford.

* Charge delivered by C. R. Sumner, D. D., Lord Bishop of Winchester, 1841.

Now England owes all to the Reformation. What was she before the revival of the Church? Servilely subject to the Tudor, she had politically and ecclesiastically, antiquated forms without spirit and without life, so that in presence of many elements of destruction, in England as in nearly all Europe, as says a Christian statesman, "Despotism seemed the only preservative from dissolution."* The Reformation developed in a remarkable manner that Christian spirit, those liberties, that fear of God, that loyal affection for princes, that love of country, those generous sacrifices, that genius, that force, that activity, which form the prosperity and the glory of England. In the century of the Reformation, Catholic Spain, gorged with the blood of the children of God, fell, overthrown by the arm of the Eternal; and reformed England took her place upon the throne of the seas, which has been justly called the throne of the world. The winds which engulfed the Armada drew this new power from the abyss. The country of Philip II., struck to the heart because she had struck the Lord's people, let fall from her hands the sceptre of the ocean; and the land of Elizabeth, strengthened

* Archives de la maison d'Orange-Nassau, publiées à la Haye, par M. Groen van Prinsterer, Conseiller d'Etat.

by the Word of God, found it floating upon the seas, seized and raised it, being called upon to use it to subject all the people of the earth to the King of Heaven. It is the Gospel which has given our antipodes to England.* All that she possesses has been given her by the Gospel. If the Gospel dies in these illustrious isles, from the blows which Romanism and Puseyism now unite to give, then must be written upon their so long triumphant banner: *ICHABOD, the glory of the Lord is departed.*

God has given the power of the seas to the nations who everywhere carried with them the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But if instead of this good news of salvation, it is another, a human and sacerdotal religion, which England carries to the heathens, God will withdraw his power.

Already the evil is great. Already in India, the Puseyite missionaries content themselves with teaching the natives rites and ceremonies, without troubling themselves with the conversion of the heart, thus entering largely into the Romish method. Already they oppose evangelical missionaries, and trouble the weak souls among the natives, telling them that all those who have not received imposition of hands are not ministers.

* New Zealand.

Let England be unfaithful to the Gospel, and God will humble her in those powerful isles on which she bases her throne, and in those far countries where she extends her empire.

The moment that England abandons the faith of the Bible, the crown will fall from her head. Ah, and we also, Christians of the continent and Christians of the universal world, we should clothe ourselves in mourning if her power was broken. We love her because of Jesus Christ, we pray for her because of Jesus Christ. But if the apostasy begins to be accomplished, we shall no longer have for her but cries, and groans, and tears. What are the bishops doing—what is the Church doing? This is the universal question. If the Church of England was well ordered, she would put into her pulpits teachers submissive to the Word of God, conformably to her thirty-nine Articles, and she would remove those who violate her laws, who poison youth, who trouble souls, and who would destroy the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

A few episcopal charges are not enough. Undoubtedly we believe that no power can take away from the Christian the right which he has *to search the Scriptures, and to prove the spirits whether they be of God*. But we do not believe

that the ministers are all powerful; we do not believe that the servants of a church can announce doctrines which destroy it. The apostles and elders, with the whole Church, did they not judge rightly to silence those of Antioch who would substitute, as now at Oxford, ceremonial ordinances for the grace of Christ? (Acts xv. 22.) Whenever did a church well constituted content herself with having a lonely voice here and there?

The *convocations* of the English Church, shall they always remain a vain ceremony, an etiquette without reality? If one cannot change their nature, should there not be for great evils, great remedies? Cannot the Church in England stir herself up, as formerly the Church at Jerusalem? *The elders and all the Church*, (Acts xv. 22,) can they not form a council, which shall, as formerly that at Nice, if forced to believe in tradition, place the word of God upon an elevated throne, to show that it is to *it* that authority belongs, and condemning and cutting off mortal errors, shall render to Jesus Christ and to his word that sovereign authority, which usurping hands are ready to take from him.

If the Church is still silent, if she leaves her most sacred foundations in her universities to be

destroyed, then (and we say it with the deepest grief) a voice will rise like that of the prophet, and cry—Woe to the Church! Woe to the people! Woe to England!

There are two ways, Gentlemen, to destroy Christianity; the one is to deny it, the other is to displace it. Put the Church above Christianity, the hierarchy above the divine word, ask a man, not if he has received the Holy Spirit, but if he has received baptism by the hand of those whom they call the successors of the apostles and their delegates; all this doubtless flatters the pride and the spirit in the natural man, but it is fundamentally opposed to the Bible, and gives a mortal blow to the religion of Jesus Christ. If God had willed that Christianity was chiefly an ecclesiastical, sacerdotal, and hierarchical system, like the Mosaic, he would have ordered and settled it in the New Testament, as he has the other in the old. But there is nothing similar in the new covenant. All the declarations of the Lord and his apostles are designed to establish that the new religion given to the world, is essentially *spirit and life*, and not a new system of priesthood and ordinances. *The kingdom of God, says Jesus, cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo here! or Lo there! for behold the king-*

dom of God is within you. (Luke xvii. 20, 21.) The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. (Rom. xiv. 17.)

Let us, then, attribute a divine institution and a divine authority to the *essence* of the Church, but by no means to its *form*. There is, doubtless, on the part of God, a minister of the word; there are the sacraments, that is to say, general forms which are for the universal Church; but to place the *particular* form to which each sect belongs above the Christian element is a narrow bigotry which infallibly brings death. This evil has long reigned in the Eastern Church, and made her barren. It is the essence and destruction of the Church of Rome. It aims to introduce itself into all churches; it shows itself in England, in Anglicanism; in Germany, in Lutheranism; and it also shows itself in the Reformed and Presbyterian Church. It is that mystery of iniquity which had already shown itself in the time of the apostle. (2 Thess. ii. 7.) Let us reject, and let us combat this principle of death wherever it is found. We are men before we are Swiss, or French, English, or Germans; let us remember that we are also Christians before we are Anglicans or Lutherans, Reformers or dissenters. These

divers forms of churches are as the divers costumes, the divers faces, and yet more the divers characters of nations ; the essential of the man is not in all these accessories. It is in the heart that beats beneath all this exterior, in the conscience seated there, in the intelligence shining there, in the will formed there. If they put the Church above Christianity, form above life, they shall infallibly reap that which they have sown, they shall soon have for a church, an assembly of skeletons, brilliantly clothed perhaps ; ranged, I grant, in admirable order, imposing to the flesh ; but icy, motionless, and resembling a pale legion of the dead. If Puseyism, (and unhappily some of the doctrines which it proclaims are not in England, in that school only,)—if Puseyism advance in the English Church, in a few years the sources of her life will be dried. The feverish excitement which the malady at first produced, will soon give place to languor, the blood will congeal, the muscles will freeze, and that Church shall soon be no more than a dead body, upon which the eagles shall come from all quarters to feed. All forms, papal, patriarchal, episcopal, consistorial, or presbyterian, have no more than human value, human authority. Do not let us value the bark more than the sap, the body above

the soul, form above life, the visible church above the invisible, the priest above the Holy Spirit. Let us hate all spirit of sect, ecclesiastical, national or dissenting, but love Jesus Christ in every sect, ecclesiastical, national, or dissenting. The true catholicity which we have lost, and which we ought to find again, is that of love in the truth. A restoration of the Church is necessary—I know it, I feel it, I invoke it from the depth of my soul. Only let us follow after it in the path where it may be found. Forms, ecclesiastical constitutions, and the organization of congregations, have their importance, and even their great importance. *But seek we FIRST the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto us.* (Matt. vi. 33.)

Let us then, Sirs, be decided and firm in the truth; and in loving those who stray, let us freely march against error. Let us place ourselves upon the eternal rock of ages, which is the Word of God, and we will leave all these vain opinions, all these witless innovations, which endlessly are born and die in the world, tumultuously to fall beneath us.

“Two schemes of doctrine,” says Dr. Pusey, “the Genevan and the Catholic, are, probably for

the last time, struggling within our Church." We accept this definition.

One of those who have most forcibly resisted these errors, the Rev. W. Goode, seems to believe that by "the Genevan system," Dr. Pusey meant to designate the Unitarian, Pelagian, Latitudinarian system, the sad fruit of the eighteenth century, which has desolated the Church, not only in Geneva, but almost in all Christendom. "According to the well-known Romish tactics," says Mr. Goode, "the opponents of the Tractators are all classed together under that name which, as is supposed, will bring upon them the greatest amount of odium. They belong to the *Genevan school*!"*

Truly, sirs, if it was the Unitarian school of Geneva and of England, which was to wrestle with the semi-popish school at Oxford, we might fear the issue. But these teachers will meet in England, in Scotland, in Ireland, and upon the continent, and, if necessary, in our humble little Geneva, other combatants.

Yes, we willingly admit, it is the *Catholic* and the *Genevan* systems which now wrestle; but it is the system of ancient Geneva; it is the system of Calvin and of Beza, the system of the

* The Case as it is,

Reformation and of the Gospel. What they would throw upon us as opprobrium, we receive as an honour; Geneva has set herself for three centuries against Rome, let Geneva now set herself against Oxford.

"I should like," says one of these teachers,* "to see the Patriarch of Constantinople and our Archbishop of Canterbury go barefoot to Rome, and fall upon the Pope's neck, and kiss him, and never let him go till they had persuaded him to be reasonable," that is to say, undoubtedly, until he ceased to proclaim them heretics and schismatics, and gave them his hand.

* W. Palmer, *Aids to Reflection*, 1841. This writing contains curious, and, without doubt, authentic conversations, which Mr. Palmer had at Geneva, in 1835, with different professors and pastors of the academy and company. "July 26. The public professor of dogmatic theology told me, when I asked what was the precise doctrine of the company of pastors at that time, on the subject of the Trinity: 'perhaps no two had exactly the same shade of opinion, that the great majority would deny the doctrine in the scholastic sense,' Aug. 4. A pastor of the company told me, that of thirty-four members, he thinks there are only four who would admit the doctrine of the Trinity." The author is almost as discontented with the Evangelical ministers as with the Unitarian. He reports that one of the first told him, August 12th, "'You are lost in the study of outward forms, mere worldly vanities; *you are a baby, a mere baby,*' he said in English."

Evangelical Christians of Geneva, of England, and of all lands! it is another pilgrimage which you have to make; it is not to Rome that you must direct your steps, *"to those seven hills upon which sitteth a woman arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations, (Rev. xvii.;) but it is towards that true and perfect tabernacle not made with hands, (Heb. ix.,) towards that throne of mercy where we find grace to help us in our need. (Heb. iv.)"*

It is not upon the neck of "the man of sin," that you must throw yourselves, covering him with your kisses and your tears, but upon the neck of that man of righteousness *with whom Jacob wrestled before the day dawned. (Gen. xxxii.) He who is seated at the right hand of God in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. (Eph. i. 20. 21.)* Yes, let the children of God arise, in the east and in the west, those who understand the signs of the times, and see that upon the issue of the actual strifes, strifes so diverse, so numerous and so powerful, really depend the destinies of the Church; and they shall form a true fraternity, a

holy and powerful catholicism, and being but of one heart and one soul, they shall cry as Moses at the departure of the ark in the desert: "Rise up, Lord! and let thine enemies be scattered, and let them that hate thee flee before thee." (Num. x. 35.)

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